(c) the steps taken by Government to improve the rate of growth of production in Himachal Pradesh, especially in hilly areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NAllAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Rules for financial help to KVKs

† 917. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the principles/rules formulated for providing financial help to Krishi Vigyan Kendras, being set up by the Indian Council for Agricultural Research in each district;

(b) whether the Standing Committee on Agriculture has expressed apprehensions regarding these principles /rules;

(c) whether these Kendras cannot be made a medium for providing latest scientific information with regard to agriculture, to be farmers; and

(d) if so, what steps Government are going to take in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) provides financial help to Krishi Yigyan Kendras (KVK) to meet the cost of salary of the staff, implementing its activities, development of modest infrastructural facilities, and revolving funds for running the instructional farm. The funds are released on half yearly basis on the receipt of audit utilization certificate and demand of funds,, commensurate with the progress reports and plan of action.

(b) The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture 1996-97 did not express any apprehension on these principles/rules. The

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

committee suggested for continuation of 100% financial assistance, setting up more KVK, timely sanction of adequate funds and its monitoring, decentralized disbursement of funds by Zonal Coordinators, creation of separate budget head for KVK in Department of Agricultural Research and Education, and review of accounting procedures. Necessary measures were taken to comply with these suggestions.

(c) and (d) In order to make the Kendras a medium for providing latest scientific information in agriculture, following steps have been taken:

— Provision of a multi-disciplinary team of subject matter specialists for each KVK.

— Reorganizing its activities by including (i) on-farm testing to identify the location specificity of technology in various farming situation, (ii) front-line demonstration to establish the production potentials of newly released agricultural technologies on farmers' plots; (iii) skill training of farmers to update their knowledge in modern agricultural technologies, and (iv) in-service training of extension functionaries to orient them in the frontier areas of technology development.

— Constituting a Scientific Advisory Committee for each KVK including the representatives of farmers and farm women, research institutions, district development departments, lead bank and media to review its activities and provide necessary guidance.

Mobile Offices of Banks in Rural Areas

918. SHRI CM. IBRAHIM:
SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether with a view to provide credit and storage facilities to farmers at their door-steps, Government have been considering to take steps to ensure that Rural and Co-operative Banks provide mobile offices which may, while giving loans, also collect stores of